

The Junior Attending Rotation- A System Based Curriculum for Senior Anesthesiology Residents

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Introduction

Many anesthesia practices in the United States use certified registered nurse anesthetists (CRNAs) to provide anesthesia care to patients in multiple locations. Alumni surveys of recent graduates from our program have identified a need for an introduction to the skills necessary to accomplish excellent patient care with efficiency in this setting. Introduced in July 2004, senior residents, under close supervision by the attending anesthesiologist, are performing a supervisory role- the junior attending- in the management of a four-room outpatient/ short stay surgical unit. During this one month rotation, they gain valuable experience with regards to all aspects of perioperative management and case coordination. The curriculum is novel and under development.

Methods

The senior resident received an orientation with literature pertaining to the supervision of nurse anesthetists including ASA position statements¹ and financial² practice information. Clinical activities included evaluation of each patient and discussion of the plan with attending staff and the nurse anesthetist. They supervised all perioperative management. In consultation with the nurse managers, they coordinated cases and personnel to improve the efficiency of the unit. At the conclusion of the day, the faculty member and resident reviewed the events of the day and feedback was obtained. The residents were evaluated for medical knowledge and patient care. They were also evaluated for the efficient organization and implementation of anesthetic management at multiple sites and communication skills with nursing and surgical teams. A 360 degree evaluation is in preparation including patient satisfaction. The residents evaluated the rotation.

Results

Six residents have participated in the rotation. Residents report high satisfaction in developing autonomy and developing important communication skills that facilitate working within the "anesthesia team" model. Their satisfaction is proportional to their autonomy. In addition, residents stated that this rotation has greatly enhanced their ability to multitask and manage personnel.

Discussion

Improving the resident's understanding of varied types of anesthesia practice is a goal of resident training. In the rotation under development, we have exposed the senior resident to the responsibility of CRNA supervision in the multiple location setting. It is expected that this experience will improve the residents understanding of the system based practice and communication skills essential to this setting. It will help in career decisions and prepare them for efficient and safe OR management.

References

1. The Scope of Practice of Nurse Anesthetists <http://www.asahq.org/Washington/nurseanesscope.pdf>
2. Is physician anesthesia cost-effective? Abenstein JP *Anesth Analg* 01-MAR-2004; 98(3): 750-7.